

NAVY MEDICINE MAGAZINE

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NAVY MEDICINE IN FOCUS

Public Health Center Hosts World AIDS Day Webinar

BY PROSS – DECEMBER 9, 2013

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Story by Hugh Cox, Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center Public Affairs

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HIV

...Sailors and Marines should know

HIV happens...

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...every 4 days,
another active duty
Sailor or Marine
is diagnosed with HIV.

...to women:
in the U.S., about 1 of 5 people
that got HIV last year is a
woman.



...to men.
Men who have unprotected
sex with men are at high risk
of getting HIV.
Men who have unprotected
sex with women can also get HIV.



But it doesn't have to...

?

Saying no to sex, or
finding one, long-term,
HIV-free, monogamous
partner can protect you
from HIV.

Learn More



July 2013

Condoms used correctly
and every time
greatly reduce your risk.



Just pulling out,
or just asking your partner if
they have HIV
are NOT safe strategies.



Ask for an HIV test every
year if you are
a man who has sex with
men or if you have
sex without a condom
with casual partners.



**HAVY AND MARINE CORPS
PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER**
PREVENTION AND PROTECTION

PORTSMOUTH, Va. — The Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center (NMCPHC) hosted a webinar in support of World AIDS Day, Dec. 02, for Navy health professionals that addressed HIV prevention in the Department of the Navy (DON).

The webinar was presented by Mr. Michael (Bob) MacDonald, Manager, Sexual Health and Responsibility Program (SHARP), NMCPHC, and focused on HIV trends as well as tools and resources to help promote HIV prevention. According to MacDonald, the HIV epidemic is still present. Globally, over 30 million people with a diagnosis of AIDS have died, including over 600,000 in the U.S. Over 35 million more are living with HIV today, including over 1 million people in the U.S.

"World AIDS Day is an opportunity for each of us to remember that the HIV epidemic is still with us," said MacDonald. "The HIV epidemic in the Navy is very similar to the epidemic among Americans in general. As Navy health professionals, this is where we must focus our HIV prevention effort if we ever hope to bend the curve."

The webinar occurred immediately following World AIDS Day, which is held annually on Dec. 01. Nearly 20 health professionals from military installations world-wide dialed-in for the webinar that included frank discussion on the incidence of HIV in the DON along with the importance of developing and delivering key HIV reduction messages.

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"It is important that we get this information out to the troops," said Mr. John Swett, Health Educator, Naval Hospital Camp Lejeune. "There seems to be a sense of security amongst many our troops that since 'we are tested regularly, we don't need to worry'. We need to be frank and blunt about the discussion and not try to 'candy coat' the issue."

Social media has increasingly become vital in NMCPHC's efforts to successfully reach health professionals as well as Sailors and Marines regarding HIV prevention and awareness.

"Silence is not a proven public health promotion strategy," said Cmdr. Connie Scott, Head, Health Promotion and Wellness, NMCPHC. "We must talk about HIV if we are ever to reduce the incidence of HIV."

"I strongly urge our healthcare professionals to practice due diligence in fully utilizing the sharp approach and resources to help reduce the occurrence of HIV, and STIs in general," added Scott.

SHARP has a webpage dedicated to HIV prevention among Sailors and Marines. Free posters, fact sheets, a clinical-sex-health-screening-guide, a ready-to-use-briefing, guidelines and a film entitled "HIV and Me" are available from the webpage and SHARP toolbox DVD for use in HIV prevention efforts.

For more information on SHARP, visit NMCPHC online at <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/health-promotion/reproductive-sexual-health/Pages/reproductive-and-sexual-health.aspx>

For more news from Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center, visit www.navy.mil/local/nmcphc/.



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